

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

When the "Fairness Doctrine" was eliminated, the public was assured that the major media would police themselves to ensure that public airways would not be co-opted for partisan or private advantage. This effort by Sinclair Broadcasting is the most blatant example yet of the utter failure of the major media to police itself as promised. And, if the FCC fails to act to stop this blatant distortion for political advantage, then it will signal the failure of the FCC to serve the public interest by enforcing reasonable rules concerning partisan political campaigning masquerading as "news" to get around existing rules. The American people have a right to expect their FCC to serve the "PUBLIC" interest and not pander to big media.

Thank you.